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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to examine the role played by the media in the 1972 U.S. Senate election in Virginia during the Scott and Spong campaigns. Its primary interest is the use of television, particularly the intense blitz by the Scott organization, which is viewed as a significant variable in the Scott victory. The case study seeks to provide insight into the uses and effects of media saturation in a state-wide election. It is accompanied by a presentation of the television materials utilized in the respective campaigns. The conclusions concerning the role of the media in the campaign are: the media were a significant variable in the outcome of the Scott-Spong election contest; the mass media, especially television, served as a catalyst that activated the potential of other campaign factors, such as the political shift in the state and the public displeasure over forced busing; the use of strategy, placement, and exposure of materials is more determinative of election success than production quality; and as a result of the campaign, the extensive use of the mass media, especially television, has become a prominent aspect of political activity in Virginia. (LL)

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"VIRGINIA AND THE PRESIDENT NEED HIM" vs. "YOUR OWN SENATOR . . . HIS OWN MAN:" A CASE STUDY OF THE USE OF MEDIA AS A CAMPAIGN INSTRUMENT

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ABSTRACT

"Virginia and the President Need Him" vs. "Your Own Senator . . . His Own Man:" A Case Study of the Use of Media as a Campaign Instrument

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Since the 1960 Kennedy-Nixon campaign, the extensive use of media has become a significant factor in American political life. Television, in particular has been applied to influence citizen attitudes, create partisan support, and disseminate political information. There is agreement that the nature and dimensions of television's impact on contemporary politics in the United States is not completely understood. The knowledge is largely confined to the national level.

Elections more than any other political activity have been effected by television. It has argued that it has created a new politics that discounts the traditional factors determining the outcome of elections.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the role played by the media in the 1972 U.S. Senate election in Virginia by the Scott and Spong campaigns. Its primary interest is the use of television, particularly the intense blitz by the Scott organization, which is viewed as a significant variable in the Scott victory. The case study seeks to provide insight into the uses and effects of media saturation in a state-wide election. It is accompanied by a presentation of the television materials utilized in the respective campaigns.

The Scott campaign utilized a complex three phase strategy. The media was used to identify the candidate and establish a conservative image, show support for the President, develop issues, attack the incumbent on his legislative record, and create a pro-McGovern liberal image for Spong. Modular television and radio materials were used and varied designed to maximize impact within the selected media markets. Scott was marketed as a new political product under the theme "Virginia and the President need him."

By contrast, the Spong media campaign seems simple. The main emphasis is positive image development and reinforcement. Spong, identified by his campaign slogans as "the man for today" and "your own Senator...his own man," was pictured as hardworking, competent, and independent. The electorate was to be attracted by the image and vote for Spong because they liked and trusted him. The media materials rarely strayed from the theme to confront either Scott or the issues.

In conclusion, the image oriented strategy of the Spong media campaign was ineffective and did not overcome the multiple image-issue effects and intricate saturation media usage by the opposition. The Scott media did a better job of communicating the right message to specific groups of voters, thereby achieving maximum impact. The Spong message, was diffuse and non-directional.

The differences in the use of the media did have an impact on the outcome of the election, particularly in mobilizing those voters alienated by the shift in the Democratic Party and repelled by the liberal image created fro Spong.

The successful use of television and radio in the Senate election had the effect of transforming Virginia's arcane, cartly, and Byrd machine politics of Virginia into the media dominated pattern of the 1970's.

"VIRGINIA AND THE PRESIDENT NEED HIM" vs. "YOUR OWN SENATOR . . . HIS OWN MAN:" A CASE STUDY OF THE USE OF MEDIA AS A CAMPAIGN INSTRUMENT*

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Introduction

Since the Kennedy-Nixon campaign in 1960, the mass communications media have become increasingly significant as factors in the political life of American society. Television, especially, has been applied as an instrument for influencing citizen attitudes, mobilizing partisan support changing or reinforcing opinion, developing support for policy decisions, and generally disseminating political information. There is general agreement with the conclusion that what is known of the macro-effects of television on the body politic is only a small fraction of what needs to be known."[1] On the micro-level, the data and conclusions remain largely incomplete and speculative. Moreover, the total nature and dimensions of television's impact on contemporary politics in the United States is not completely understood. The available knowledge is generally confined to the national level with few studies of media use and effects at the state and local levels.

Elections, more than any other area of collective political activity, have been effected by the use of television. The medium, together with its computer and professional consultant support, has allegedly created a "new politics" in the United States.[2] This may be described as a stage of development where factors, techniques, and forces which traditionally determined the outcome of electoral contests have lost their potency or are disappearing from the scene altogether.. For example, the political party seems to have been replaced with a high-powered personal campaign organization and the candidate's image is more important than the party's platform or position.

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The author wishes to express his appreciation for assistance, cooperation and support of Senator William L. Scott and former Senator William B. Spong Mr. Tom Agee of Finnegan and Agee, Richmond, Virginia; Mr. Jack Lewis and Mr. Allan Jones of the Spong campaign organization; Mr. Don Cuthreil, and the staff of WTAR-TV, Norfolk, Virginia; the engineering staff of WHRO-TV, Norfolk, Virginia; Mr. Russell Vernon of AVEC Electronics Corporation; my wife Marlene J. Hager; Marcia Gibson; and the Old Dominion University Office of Research and Sponsored Programs in the preparation of this paper.

The presentation of the paper is accompanied by video tape recordings of the political advertising materials used during the 1972 Scott and Spong Senate campaigns in Virginia.

....

The 1972 U.S. Senate election heralded the arrival of the "age of new politics" in Virginia. The campaign was one of the first examples in the Commonwealth's long political history of the impact of a media saturation campaign on a state-wide election. It was an experience that has transformed the arcane, courtly, and Byrd-controlled politics of Virginia into the media dominated pattern of the 1970's.

Tabulation of returns on November 7, 1972 demonstrated convincingly the effect that a well organized and directed media blitz could have on the outcome of an election. The incumbent Senator from Virginia, William B. Spong, lost the reelection bid to his chief rival in the three-way race, Representative William L. Scott. The other entry, Independent Horace "Hunk" Henderson, finished a poor third becoming a footnote to the election, not even being accorded the rank of spoiler. The official results of the 1972 Virginia Senate election are presented in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1

1972 Virginia General Election
Returns for United States Senator[a]
(in percent)

AREA	Votes Received			
	Scott	Spong	Henderson	Write-In
Cities	17.7 (247,781)	20.1 (280,222)	0.9 (12,525)	.003 (38)
Counties	33.7 (470,556)	26.0 (363,741)	1.5 (21,387)	.001 (18)
Total[b]	51.4 (718, 337)	46.1 (643,963)	2.4 (33,912)	.004 (56)

[a]Source: Commonwealth of Virginia, State Board of Elections, Official Statement of the Whole Number of Votes Cast in the Commonwealth of Virginia for United States Senator at the General Election Held on November 7, 1972, p. 3.

[b]Total votes cast 1,396,268.

As the table indicates, the Scott support was greatest in the rural and suburban areas while Spong did better in the cities. The distribution of the vote may have been predictable based on the emphasis and application pattern in the respective media campaigns.

The result was that the affable, moderate to liberal, and seemingly popular Democrat Spong had been replaced by a little known conservative Republican Scott who had recently burst on the state-wide Virginia political scene through an extensive media saturation campaign. The election results were considered an upset since Spong was consistently predicted to win the race easily over the right wing challenger. He was the only incumbent Democratic Senator to lose his seat in 1972 and as a result Scott became Virginia's first Republican Senator in 84 years.

How did Scott win and why did Spong lose? These were the questions which both amateur and professional analysts attempted to answer on Novmeber 8. Several explanations were offered for the election results. Principal among these was the positive effect of the fabled Nixon coattails. It seems, however, that the coattails were neither as long nor as wide for Scott's campaign organization. Undoubtedly, Nixon's landslide was a significant factor in the Republican victory in Virginia as it was for the Senatorial candidacy of Jesse Helms in North Carolina. Nixon carried the state with 67% of the vote, but Scott only received about 51%. The difference in percentages indicates considerable ticket splitting with more preference demonstrated for the President than his Senatorial ticket mate. In certain areas, such as Tidewater, Scott's organizational association and support from popular Republican Congressmen such as G. William Whitehurst in the Second District may have been more useful and effective than presidential coattailing.

Other reasoning offered was that George McGovern, who led the national Democratic ticket, carried the popular label of radical and therefore alienated party followers who could be relied upon to support Spong's candidacy. However, the alienation of traditional Democrats had already begun in Virginia with the Byrd defection to Independent status and the development of a conservative coalition in 1970. Perhaps, the tendency was only intensified by the McGovern candidacy.

Spong's own record in the Senate on civil rights, gun control, the Omnibus Crime Bill, the Haynsworth and Carswell Supreme Court nominations, questions concerning the use of presidential power, and his anti-administration posturing were also cited as sources of voter alienation. These actions seemed, however, to earn the Senator as much support and respect as he lost. These actions did provide a basis for the opposition to develop a particularly devastating effect with their media use.

Next, there was the view that Spong had failed to pay attention to campaign fundamentals whereas Scott did. The campaign was poorly and seemingly haphazardly organized. Organization had been a strong point of the 1966 Spong effort but it was apparently absent along with the candidate himself who decided to adopt a statesman role and devote attention to Senate rather than election business during a significant portion of the campaign. The poor show on organization may be in part a reflection of the overorganized and tireless Republican effort in the state which consolidated campaign headquarters and staff. Anything less, gave the appearance of haphazardness.

All of the explanations cited above and others, such as Scott's superior financial resources and development of constituent support through extensive personal and family campaigning, are correct in part and especially from the point of view of traditional politics. While not discounting the effect of other factors, a more persuasive analysis focuses on the difference in the use of the media, especially television, as a campaign instrument and its place as a key variable influencing the election outcome and treats the other activities as supplementary. Scott and Spong, themselves, both acknowledged the importance and the prime role played by the media in the election results.[3]

Spong's defeat appears to have been the consequence of the expert application of what has been described as "a new style in election campaigns."[4] In other words, the incumbent who had wrested control of Virginia's junior Senate seat from the influence of the infamous Byrd machine in 1966 by approximately 600 votes was defeated by the intense and professional use of the media and in particular the new political machine, television. It was the electronic media that provided the vehicle through which the Scott organization could operationalize a well planned strategy to take advantage of the opponent's and his party's weakness, and deliver the Senate seat to an individual that has been characterized at least by one source as a "political Neandrathal."[5]

The purpose of this paper is to examine, in a case study manner, the nature of the media usage in the 1972 Scott-Spong Senate campaign in Virginia. The Henderson effort is not considered because it did not offer any serious challenge nor did it utilize the electronic media. The primary focus is the uses and effects of television, especially the intense blitz application by the Scott organization. Some attention will also be devoted to the television aspects of the campaign. The case study may provide some insight into the nature of a successful media campaign. It is an effort to expand the understanding of the impact of television on the election process in a state-wide context and its use as a characteristic of contemporary political campaigns. The study does not attempt any empirical measurement of effects on the electorate. Rather, it approaches the problem from the perspective of uses of the media by the rival campaign organizations and the effects which they sought to achieve. The examination is therefore concerned with the macro-effects of the media campaign and parallels to some extent the Rose and Fuch's study of the 1966 California gubenatorial campaign.[6] It differs, however, in that it is concerned with actual media usage rather than theme development in campaign films.

Data Sources

All three candidates for the Virginia Senate seat were contacted prior to the election and requested to provide copies of the television and radio advertising materials utilized during their campaigns. The materials, in the form of video and audio tape recordings, were supplied by the respective advertising agencies responsible for production and placement. Finnegan and Agee of Richmond, Virginia produced the Scott media package and Martin Waltzer also of Richmond developed the one for Spong. Upon receipt, the video and audio tapes were assembled in their campaign sequence, edited to eliminate extraneous portions, and duplicated for use in connection with this paper. No television or radio materials were received from the Henderson organization. The lack of paid television and radio advertising in Henderson's campaign was due to limited financial resources and his media exposure was

restricted to news reporting and newspaper ads. newspaper ads.

In addition, the principal candidates and the individuals most involved in media campaign development, coordination, and direction were interviewed. These were Senators Scott and Spong, and Tom Agee and Jack Lewis who worked with the respective campaigns. They supplied valuable information on the strategies utilized, uses of the media, some insight into the data base utilized to plan and develop the campaign strategy, and some professional observations concerning the campaign.

Scott vs. Spong: Campaign Strategy and the Media

Generally, the use of the media in the Scott and Spong campaigns presents a case of the relative success of different campaign approaches competing for the same objective. The method employed and results achieved are somewhat similar to the 1970 Senate campaign in New York between Republican incumbent Charles E. Godell and Conservative James L. Buckley. The low-key Spong approach which concentrated largely on image politics with some mild issue development was devastated by a hard-line and complex image-issue media saturation plan by the Scott organization.

It should also be noted that neither television or radio advertising in either of the campaigns spoke directly to the black voter. The Scott message was directed primarily at a conservative, white, lower and middle class, and suburban-rural constituency. Spong's media campaign only indirectly related to black problems and casually shows black individuals attentive to the Senator's message. The absence of a black emphasis in the two media campaigns can be explained as follows. As a constituency, the black community in Virginia is not substantially large enough to determine the outcome of an election although it can have an impact in the large cities. In addition, in the 1972 Senate election they were divided in their support. Further, Scott's own well-documented tough approach to racial problems, which caused the failure by the Virginia Branch of Blacks for the Re-election of the President to endorse Scott, did not allow a positive black tone in the campaign. Finally, the effective black constituencies are located in urban areas. These were not the principal focus of Scott's media efforts and were largely conceded to Spong by his opponent.

The uses of the media as well as its effect on the outcome of the election was an important part of the overall campaign plan. The following examines the development and application of the media from the initial stage of research to determine the nature of the electoral market in Virginia through the operationalization of the campaign strategy via the respective media plans.

Market Research

The initial step in the development of both the Scott and Spong media campaign strategies was a statewide survey of a random sample of registered

voters during August 1972 conducted by their respective agencies. The technique is the political analog of advertising market research. It seems to be the common point of departure for all campaigns especially those which intend to utilize media.

The Scott organization's research had three basic objectives: first, to determine Spong's popularity; second, to ascertain the level of Scott's identification and his support for the Senate seat; and third, to identify what issues were important to voters in which area of the state.

The survey provided the following results. Spong's electoral support was measured to be about 35% of the electorate. The statistic was interpreted as encouraging since it was assumed that the incumbent should easily be able to record a 45% support level. To Scott's campaign organization this meant that Spong was somewhat weak and that there was something more than a slim hope of displacing him. In addition, the data indicated that there were some significant gaps in the Spong support across the state and that the weakness seemed to stem from the Senators controversial voting record.

Next, the results showed that Scott was virtually unknown outside his own 8th Congressional district. In the southside Virginia city of Danville he was often confused with governor of North Carolina, Bob Scott, rather than a candidate for the Senate. The identification level was equally low in the Tidewater cities, Richmond, and Roanoke. The results dictated that considerable attention had to be paid to acquainting the electorate with William L. Scott and his ambition for the U.S. Senate.

Finally, the data revealed that there were a variety of issues on the minds of Virginia's electorate. Most important among them seemed to be bussing, gun control, civil rights, federal spending, and the Vietnam war. Conveniently, different issues seemed to cluster in different regions of the State. For example, in the Richmond area bussing was an important election issue as result of a recent school consolidation action by the Federal Court. In Southwestern Virginia gun control ranked high and in Tidewater questions of federal spending and defense were given priority. These results provided the issues to which the candidate should speak. In addition they gave a geographic frame of reference for media message application. Reliance on this part of the data collected by the survey geared the campaign to selectively respond to the expressed current preferences of the electorate.

Spong's research effort produced some positive and negative data for his campaign planners. Most important were the problems of the incumbent's popularity and name identification. Survey results indicated that the level of support was low and that Spong was not readily recognized by the voters either in terms of name or image. The Senator had, as was observed by Jack Lewis, "a low profile for an incumbent."[7] The problem was therefore to raise the profile to a higher level and to bolster the Spong image which was determined to be soft and ill-defined.

In addition, it was ascertained that the Senator was admired, by those who identified him, for his independence, integrity, and industry. These aspects of Spong's public image seem to have best penetrated the electorates' consciousness. The "three I's" would therefore become the points of departure in the image building media effort contemplated by the campaign organization.

Third, these results and the Senator's own political style indicated that he did better in small group situations as opposed to a mass environment. Therefore, the most effective setting for the media spots would be to have Spong discussing issues and answering questions with a few people. The format could reap two potential benefits. It would show the incumbent at his best, in a relaxed interpersonal context. And, at the same time, it would depict his real concern for the problems facing people with which the electorate could easily identify.

Finally, some dominant issue areas rose from the survey. These were much the same as uncovered by the Scott efforts. However, they seemed to lack the precise regional definition which the competition had elaborated.

Given the nature and interpretation of the data, it was decided to launch a media campaign that would respond to perceived image deficiencies, capitalize on Spong's ease and persuasiveness in one-on-one or small group communication, respond to the pressing issues such as bussing, and portray the Senator's style of independence, integrity, and industry. In short, the main theme of the media effort would be to solidify the Spong image for the electorate and affect their voting calculus with the manipulations of its positive dimensions.

Campaign Strategy Assumptions

The next major step was the development of a strategy that would get the candidates elected. In each case the strategy development was based on several assumptions.

Most important to the Scott campaign was the conclusion that President Nixon's popularity would continue and he would be reelected by a landslide majority. It was imperative, therefore, to capitalize on Nixon's support and to connect the Senate campaign to the Presidential one. Aside from the physical sharing of headquarters facilities mentioned above, the Scott organization made every effort to stitch and glue their candidate to the popular head of the national ticket. The principal campaign slogan, for example, proclaimed "Virginia and the President need him (Scott)." Another used on radio and in flyers carried the message that "Virginians have a unique opportunity to vote for President Nixon twice this year." In addition, the explicit or implicit theme of most Scott media advertising was support for the President, as well as his administration and policy. It was further pointed out by Scott's chief consultant that if Nixon had not been in the picture so strongly the outcome in the Senate race may have been completely different.

The second assumption of the campaign related to the Democratic presidential nominee George McGovern. By the time the Scott organization

was at this stage of planning, McGovern had already been pegged as an extreme liberal candidate. His nomination had already caused serious party and electorate divisions. The problem had to be exploited in order to benefit Scott. Somehow Spong's public image would have to be steadily pushed to the left and be more closely identified with McGovern and his positions. This aspect of the campaign was an item of constant attention and was described as "a great chess game" between the rival organizations.[8] A substantial effort was directed at creating a negative image for Spong, and the opposition manipulated so as to give the appearance that he shared the radical views of the Democratic nominee. In other words, the Scott organization was intent on creating a millstone effect aimed at defeating Spong. The task was co-equal in importance with enhancing the coattail effect for their candidate. The more the incumbent could be associated with McGovern the better were the chances that he would be defeated.

It seems that this tactic may be difficult to apply since it depends upon a certain set of circumstances. Tom Agee, a key figure in the Scott organization, agreed that had 1972 not been a Presidential election year and if the Democrats had not made the choice they did for their nominee, there might not have been a Scott victory to celebrate.[9] When, however, the conditions of an unpopular candidate running on the same ticket are present, it does seem possible to develop a millstone effect. In such an effort, the media can be used to create the negative image of the opponent, selectively publicize his record, and develop linkages with the unsatisfactory ticket mate. These were the themes used in several of the Scott advertisements that transformed the moderate Spong into a McGovern disciple.

Third, Scott was a political unknown to most Virginians. Therefore, he would be marketed as a new product through the use of massive advertising. The candidate's organization was aware, as Asten pointed out in his study of the Percy campaign in Illinois, that as a product a political candidate is dramatically different from all other products.[10] Most importantly he is a human being that is antimated by his own will and responds individually to the environment. Unlike a bar of soap or pack of cigarettes, the candidate cannot be programmed for consistent pro-image activities.

The inherent difficulties of marketing Scott as a new political product were in part overcome by his anonimity with most voters. The electronic media could be used to establish or solidify an image, create sentiment, and develop an orientation that would not run into conflict with the public's cognitive impression of Scott the politician. This is not to say that the campaign organization was going to create a smoothly packaged phoney political product wholly inconsistent with the candidate's personality or beliefs. Rather, it was not so tightly bound by his past image or actions, as Spong was, and could selectively control the consistency of the product image with the real personality of the candidate. Here again the media, especially television, provided the major means of image development.

The final planning assumption was drawn directly from the market research conducted in August. It was that different issues were important in different parts of the state. The campaign, especially in its use of media,

would take into account these variations and respond accordingly. As a result, the campaign adopted a modular rather than blanket approach to the development of the campaign. The priority issues were determined for the major media markets in the state. Differently composed packages of video and radio materials were produced in order to maximize the regional issue variations uncovered by the earlier survey. In addition, the decision was made not to purchase television time in Northern Virginia. This was judged to be an area of Spong support and that campaign resources could be more effectively spent on media time in the other areas which were more disposed toward Scott or the conservative political approach he represented. In a sense, the Scott organization conceded Northern Virginia to Spong and concentrated in the other markets. Radio, however, because of its lower cost and higher specificity in terms of listening groups was heavily used in this particular market. In markets, such as Richmond, sub-modular packages were produced to account for audience variation and group listening habits on radio. While the primary Richmond television and radio modules played up the bussing issue, a secondary package was placed on a country-western radio station that focused on the gun control problem.

The modular technique is a very important one for making the campaign rhetoric more relevant to the audience. It permits more specificity in the message and enables the campaign to account for important regional variations. The technique, particularly when it includes sub-modular packages, has the effect of differentiating the mass audience within a single market into smaller and more homogeneous groups. The method enhances the ability of the media to penetrate the audience more effectively and thereby communicate the right message to the most responsive individuals.

It appears that the basic assumptions underlying the Spong campaign strategy were simpler than those of the Scott organization. First, the Senator's image would have to be strengthened and more precisely defined. Electorate doubts about his political orientation and activities on their behalf in the Senate would have to be eliminated as much as possible. A low profile moderate approach in the media advertising was viewed as the best way to communicate this message.

Next, Spong had the advantage of being the incumbent. It is almost universally agreed that this status would give the candidate a better chance of winning the election. He had a record of performance which could be used to demonstrate his skill and knowledge in national politics, and response to problems on behalf of his constituents. Moreover, Spong did not have to overcome the nagging question of experience. Media would therefore show the image of a hard working concerned legislator.

Third, Spong was and would continue to be a competent Senator. He had already attracted the attention of his colleagues, and the Democratic Party leadership by service on the prestigious Senate Foreign Relations Committee, work on Congressional reform, writings on the nature of presidential power, and actions on environmental questions. Spong's name had already surfaced in discussions of future leadership positions in the Senate. His representation and service made him a natural choice to return to the Senate. He would be characterized as the "man for today" who had personal and professional qualities that would benefit Virginia and the nation by his continued public service.

Finally, there was the need to keep the Spong candidacy separate from that of the Democratic Presidential nominee George McGovern. The separation would have to be kept short of disavowal since that would jeopardize any possible support forthcoming from the National Democratic Party or violate the Senator's own sense of integrity. Given the divided state of the Virginia Democratic Party noted earlier, it was important to avoid being identified with the South Dakota liberal. Any such action would easily alienate many political supporters and deliver them to the Scott camp. It was only very late in the campaign that Spong admitted, reportedly after considerable badgering by Scott loyalists, that he would probably vote for McGovern rather than Nixon for President. Media advertising concentrated entirely on Spong and not feature or rely on images of national candidates. The Senator's campaign advisers were acutely aware of the potential damage any explicit or implicit association could do to the election chances. The publicity barrage late in the campaign accompanying Spong's decision to support McGovern with his own vote was an indication of what might have been if he had come out strong for the national ticket.

Media Campaign Costs and Financing

One of the major features and problems of conducting a media campaign is the high cost involved. Production and placement expenditures for television and radio materials as well as the professional personnel and techniques which support them often take the greatest portion of a candidate's budget. There seems to be a correlation between the amount available for media expenditure and the success potential of the candidate. Based on his experience, Hal Avery strongly suggests that 70% of the total campaign budget be invested in media if the candidate is thinking seriously of winning.[11]

Both the Scott and the Spong media campaigns began on a relatively equal financial footing. Each had a problem raising the necessary funds to launch its planned campaigns. Their relative financial position and the amount that could be devoted to media was far different at campaign end.

The Spong organization took the initiative and began placing its media spots and other advertising, such as billboards, as early as September 11. Their rationale was that they would get an initial advantage on the opposition and the sums spent would act as seed-money to attract more contributions and heighten name-image identification. The tactic did not, however, seem to produce the anticipated results perhaps because of the intervention of the Scott effort and the lack of readiness on the part of the voters to respond. Both Allan Jones and Jack Lewis agree that this time and money were wasted since even "the voters who tuned in were not turned on" to the campaign that far in advance of the election.[12] The Spong finances were further injured by the divided Virginia Democratic party, and the paucity of the National Democratic Party subsidies.

Although initially constrained by a perceived lack of resources, Scott's group went ahead with its planning of an extensive media campaign. It was realized that a sustained media outlay was essential for making the overall campaign strategy work effectively. The extent of the media campaign would be determeined by the amounts available. A significant factor which made possible the extensive media saturation, especially during the later part of the campaign, was a $200 thousand loan from conservative industrialist

J. Stetson Coleman. According to one of Scott's spokesman, the money provided not only the necessary capital but also a psychological boost to the campaign.[13] While the positive psychological effect of the money is debatable, it did signify that there was a view that the Virginia Senate seat was considered winnable. It also stimulated other support through various committees and from the national Republican leadership. Further the loan gave Scott credibility because of the importance of the backer. This credibility was then reinforced by the media. Most importantly, the financing allowed for the development of a more professional media campaign and the full development of the originally devised strategy, especially the final blitz.

Some ethical and legal questions were raised by Spong and others concerning the nature of the Coleman loan. It became, however, an issue largely confined to the print media in news stories and did not penetrate the Senator's paid television and radio efforts. It was an issue that could have been effectively exploited, but the Spong media pieces failed to utilize the ... and thereby lost a good opportunity for attack.

In addition to the general aspects of media campaign financing discussed above, there is a need to present more specific information about the costs of the television and radio advertising placement and production.

The following table provides some data on media campaign expenditures. Specifically, it shows the amounts spent on television advertising in the major markets in the state.

Table 2
Television Expenditures by Major
Market, 1972 Virginia Senate Campaign
(in $1000's)

Market	Candidates		Total
	Scott	Spong	
Bluefield	$ 1.2	$ 0	$ 1.2
Bristol	3.7	0	3.7
Harrisonburg	4.0	1.2	5.2
Lynchburg	2.8	0	2.8
Northern Virginia (Washington, D.C.)	0	18.7	18.7
Richmond	18.6	15.3	33.9
Roanoke	11.7	7.9	19.6
Tidewater	27.0	12.6	39.6
Total	$69.0	$55.7	$124.7

Clearly, the Scott campaign outspent Spong in all the major state television markets except Northern Virginia. Approximately $14,000 separated the two candidates. In addition to the extra money, the Scott organization utilized more markets and made wider distribution of its material. The expenditures in the Lynchburg, Bluefield and Bristol markets should be noted in this regard. The placement in these markets carried the Scott message into remoter areas of the state. More importantly, they were not matched by Spong. A general lack of resources and expenditure of approximately one-third of the television budget in the high-priced Northern Virginia market did not permit a comprehensive coverage plan. In addition, about $12,500 was spent on television early in the campaign with no measureable effect as indicated above. Taken together with the $18,000 spent in the Washington, D.C. area, this means that only approximately $25,000 was left to spend in all other markets during October and November. It was of course during the late stages of the campaign, more specifically the last week, that the Scott television blitz commenced and rolled over the Spong candidacy.

With regard to radio, the above pattern of expenditure in terms of amount and placement is repeated. Scott's reported spending approximately $67,000 on radio while Spong listed $25,000. It is interesting to note the similarity of Scott's television and radio placement expenditures. It was not the result of any calculated balance in the use of the two media. Rather, it reflects a wider distribution of Scott radio, literally blanketing the state on both AM and FM, and money made available for buying radio time because of lower production costs. Scott's radio and television materials involved about $27,000 in production costs, while Spong spent approximately $34,000. The difference in cost was due to the extensive use of video tape rather than film as well as the less costly techniques and formats utilized by Scott. As a result, some $7,000 was freed for message placement.

Media Campaign Strategy

The market research data and assumptions were combined into final media campaign strategy. Two different approaches were devised by the contending organizations. The Scott organization produced a mixed and multifaceted image-issue plan; while Spong developed an essentially image strategy that attempted to deal only marginally with the issues.

Scott

A three phase media plan was developed for Scott that was a variation of the technique first used by Robert Goodman and Associates of Baltimore for Jack M. Eckerd in the 1968 Florida gubenatorial primary.[14] Phase I of the plan concentrated on getting the voters to know who Scott was and establishing his image. It did not, however, entirely neglect issues. The first commercials placed were mainly devoted to identifying Scott as a candidate for the Senate, indicating that he was not a newcomer but already had substantial experience in national government as a member of the House of Representatives, acquainting the prospective voters with his position on a few basic issues, setting the tone of the campaign, establishing a conservative image, and providing some personal background on the man. The image was reinforced and crystallized by limited reuse of these spots during the campaign, but they were most intensely applied at the opening of the campaign.

Three television spots were produced to carry out the first or image phase of the campaign. All are essentially background material and cover the aspects of image development listed above. The first one, running 4 minutes and 30 seconds, consists of a staged-interview between Scott and Tom Agee, who was responsible for the media campaign. The format is very simple with close and medium shots of Scott responding to a series of pre-arranged questions. The thrust of the interview, in addition to providing the viewers with an opportunity to see the candidate, is to reveal some of the positions he has taken on issues and legislation generally of interest to Virginians. The issue of bussing and Scott's special actions in opposition to this desegregation method stands out as the point of emphasis along with a brief comaparison with Senator Spong's record on the question. Perhaps more importantly, it injected the race issue into the campaign. It became one of the foci around which the Scott support was organized and utilized as a means to discredit the Democratic incumbent. Spong's failure to rebutt Scott's allegations seemed specifically to confirm the view being propagandized that the Republican candidate was the only one who cared enough to respond to the problem of enforced bussing in an effort to end it, and that the incumbent really did not care, or even worse, was favorable toward it.

It is interesting to note that this television spot was produced in desperation. Initially it was planned that the media materials would be made up from film footage of the candidate on the campaign trail. Film crews followed Scott around for two weekends hoping to get enough usable footage to satisfy most requirements until the election. After looking at approximately two thousand feet of film, it was decided to utilize the staged interview with Tom Agee for the first spot. The comments by the candidate were lifted from the conversation and became the nucleus around which several 30 second issue spots used in Phase II of the campaign were developed.

A second background trailer, also 4 minutes 30 seconds in length, focused primarily on Scott's personal background. A few statements of position seem to have been added to insure the political character of the piece. The film can be best described as schmaltzy with a definite soap opera flavor. The technique utilizes a series of still pictures tracing the candidates development and achievements from early childhood through senatorial aspirations. The only live shot in the film is one of bubbles on the surface of some water indicating the fate of Scott's father who was killed in a train wreck. The mini-melodrama is narrated in part by a young woman who identifies herself as Scott's daughter Gayle. A second voice-over takes up the candidates more germane political accomplishments. More schmaltz is heaped on with background music that rises to fill the gaps between narration. The "bubbles spot," as this commercial came to be affectionately known, was produced later in the campaign. Its specific purpose was to soften Scott's image and make him more appealing to women voters. With this use in mind, it was run during prime afternoon soap opera time. The film intersected the viewing habits of many women at home in a format compatible with their normal viewing habits. The commercial provided drama and delivered a political message to a group of voters that the campaign did not seem to be reaching effectively, or were judged as not being attracted by the hard sell. It directed an emotional appeal to an audience that was already well conditioned for it by their personal television consumption styles.

The third image advertisement which also came later in the campaign stresses Scott's public career, especially his association with and support for President Nixon. It is an example of how the image was reinforced and crystallized throughout the campaign. Again the production technique involves the use of still pictures depicting the Congressman at work in Washington, a glimpse at his record, some basic positions, and a closing shot of the candidate with Richard Nixon. The spot, like all of the Phase I advertisements, was used to more precisely identify Scott to the electorate-audience, show that he was a real person who possesses national political experience, a record of responding to the needs of or "thinking like Virginians," and a staunch supporter of the President. The intended effect of these ads was to draw the candidate even closer to Republicans, conservative Democrats, Byrd supporters, Virginians who were perceived as alienated by Spong's sometimes liberalisim in the Senate, and to demonstrate links between Scott and Nixon which was essential for later coattail riding and therefore between Virginia and the Administration.

Radio and other media advertising were also directed in producing the appropriate conservative image. They generally carried the same message, but seemed to deliver more political substance, such as position statements, than did the visual media.

Phase II of the Scott media campaign consisted of short spots designed to develop the issues. These had been identified by earlier market research and had been articulated by the candidate in the first image piece. A group of 30 second television spots were produced on the topics of welfare, the war in Vietnam, fiscal policy, government spending, gun control, and the question of conservative versus liberal approaches to problems. Their format was simple. Scott was shown alone in a medium shot telling the voter his views on a selected issue. Their style and content are rather rigid, formalistic, unimaginative, and plain. The following transcript of one spot provides an example of their style and content.

Title: Gun Control

One Version
:30 seconds

VIDEO	AUDIO
1. Medium shot of Scott seated in front of a plain backdrop identified by a name line.	Voice Over: Congressman William L. Scott talks about the real victims of gun control.
2. Dolly in to a close-up of Scott.	Scott: My opponent and I disagree on gun control. Laws should be directed at the criminal not the average citizen. An additional penalty should be provided for the use of a gun in the commission of a crime, but I'm reluctant to penalize the sportsman or home owner when he needs a gun for pleasure or protection.

3. Dissolve to Scott Campaign slogan "Scott for the U.S. Senate"	Voice Over: Vote for Scott for the U.S. Senate. Virginia and the President need him.

Paid for by Virginians for Scott.
Hugh C. Mulligan, Treasurer

A series of commercials was produced in a single grinding session at Tele-Color in Washington. Literally, Scott was placed in a studio and shot the commercials one after another without varying either his approach or appearance. Such changes were deemed necessary since due to the ad placement plan it was unlikely that any one audience would see all of the spots at one time. The rigorous method of productions was not only adopted in order to use the candidate time more efficiently, but also as a means of providing as tightly controlled production environment as possible. It had been discovered early in the campaign that Scott was simply not easy to work with from a media point of view and not a natural person on camera. It was decided therefore to place him in a situation where these deficiencies could be eliminated or at best minimized. In addition, the image that was carefully developed in Phase I could be preserved and reinforced.

The commercials run from mid-campaign through the end, discuss popular issues on the minds of Virginians and compare the Scott and Spong records. They were not used in a blanket approach but rather were selectively placed throughout the state to match voter orientations revealed by earlier market research.

The ad placement pattern indicates that very little attention was paid to the Northern Virginia television market. As pointed out earlier, the mass audience of the Washington area, was not considered responsive to Scott's conservative message. In addition the costs prohibitive, and it was believed that Scott was generally well known enough to the audience. However, radio and the press were utilized to reach potentially supportive sub-groups. The nature of the media campaign made it possible to ignore the state's largest television market. The deliberate avoidance of the television market resembles the technique used by Lowell Weicker in his 1970 Senate campaign where he concentrated media placement in areas of Conneticut where he was less well known than his home district. Had the effort been predominantly image oriented, as Spong's campaign was, it would have been imperative to purchase the maximum audience possible.[15] The selection of a multi-media use, phase, and goal strategy allowed greater flexibility, demonstrated considerable sophistication by the Scott organization, and husbanded resources for expenditure for use with more receptive audiences.

Radio was used during Phase II to differentiate the mass television audience in the various markets, identify additional issues and expose the main issues in more depth. For example, one effective spot combined bussing and Spong's support of the Voting Rights Act; implied a lack of knowledge on exactly what Spong's positions are, and a claim that Scott is more compatible with what Virginian's believe than is Spong. Others described in detail Scott's view and legislature actions on bussing and the nature of the gun control problem.

These spots extended the issues identified in the television advertisements added depth to the discussion, probed the various audiences more with other reinforcing messages that would stimulate the appropriate voting response, and filled the gaps between the more generalized television package and the diverse groups in the market.

The third or "anti-Spong" phase of the media campaign was directed at, according to Tom Agee, hitting the Senator hard on his past legislative record. Spong's voting record was chosen as the point of emphasis in this phase. Publicity of the incumbent's record was important from two points of view and reveals a bi-level appraisal of the audience awareness. The materials could be directed at the sophisticated and informed voter who supposedly evaluates and takes into account such things as a candidates voting record and consistency in making an electoral decision. They are also short enough, each being 30 seconds long, to contain enough substance, and are linked sufficiently to previous material that they connect to the others, perhaps the true decision makers, who make their choices based on impression and reaction to image rather than on a more rational basis.

A media offensive was mounted during the last week of the campaign which emphasized the following themes. First, Spong's support of bussing, gun control, and voting rights legislation in the Senate. Next, a charge that there was a lack of voting unity between Virginia's two Senators. Cited was the general statistic that Spong had cancelled Byrd's vote almost 400 times. Third, it was alleged that Spong voted with presidential nominee McGovern over 700 times in the Senate. Finally, Scott had voted with a majority of Virginians in the Congress. Therefore, he would more effectively represent his constituency than had Spong.

The Phase III messages were placed in all markets previously utilized and duplicated on television and radio. They had the intent of creating several effects. Principal among them was to finalize the negative-liberal image of Senator Spong that had been so asiduously developed in Phases I and II. The incumbent's voting record was selectively used against him to demonstrate this weakness.

Secondly, the aim was to firmly tie the McGovern millstone around Spong's candidacy. The statistic that the Senator had voted over 700 times the same way McGovern had was used to imply that similar behavior on behalf of the liberal cause could be expected in the future. Based on past performance, Spong was undoubtedly a McGovern man, and would continue to act this way.

The other Senate voting statistic referred to a cancellation or nullification rate of Byrd's more conservative voting pattern. The charge was made that Spong had voted in opposition to his senior Senator almost 400 times, achieving only about a one third agreement rate. This was interpreted to mean that Virginia's representation in the Senate was somehow injured by the disagreement between its Senators. The ideal and apparently the promise of Scott's candidacy was voting solidarity and therefore maximum effect for the state's representation.

It should be noted that neither the 700 vote McGovern support nor the 400 vote Byrd cancellation rate charge is explained in terms of specifics and are generally untrue. The intent it seems was to mislead the media consumer

and dazzle him with quantitative evidence. Other available data that suggests more identity between Byrd and Spong in their voting behavior and positions on fundamental issues than implied in the cancellation rate charge. A post-election survey of roll call votes by the three Senators indicates a substantially greater solidarity between Byrd and Spong than claimed by Scott. During the six years that Spong served in the Senate he agreed with his colleague on 1649 out of 2089 roll call votes, or 78.9% of the time. Since Scott took office there have been 314 roll call votes, of which he agreed with Byrd 250 times, or 79.6% of the time. The net rise in compatability in the voting patterns of Virginia's Senators has been .7%. In addition, the data does not substantiate the Scott charge that there was a nullification rate during Spong's tenure. Neither does the evidence confirm a uniformity of conservative political philosophy that would be reflected in votes on measures involving fundamental issues such as the Indochina War and the Watergate Investigation. Scott and Byrd have split several times on these issues and at a higher rate than during the Spong years.[16]

Scott's response to the new cancellation charge in connection with a 1973 Senate vote on appropriations for the Trident submarine is that when Spong voted against Byrd it was a liberal cancelling a conservative vote. When he cancels Byrd's vote, Scott says, it is because he is more a conservative than his senior colleague.[17]

Further, with regard to Spong's voting record, it was alleged that he did not represent the majority thinking of his fellow Virginians serving in the Congress nor his constituents. The implication was that the incumbent was a maverick who could not be trusted either to present some kind of unified Virginia front or respond to the interests of the elctorate. Simply, Spong did not act or think like other Virginians. The attack carried only implied substantiation by the cumulative effect of messages broadcast in other media campaign phases. No specific data is used to support the charge of Spong's unrepresentative actions. Independent evidence produced by the League of Women Voter's on political accountability indicates the opposite of Scott's charges. The League's evaluation of each legislator's record on several major domestic and foreign policy issues, taking into account other variables which effect performance, produced a political accountability rating (PAR) for each member of the 92nd Congress. The aim of the rating was to show how well constituency was represented. The analysis of voting records shows that Scott, as a member of the House, only voted 11% of the time the way his constituency would have on the selected issues. On the other hand, Spong scored a 50% on his record of matching constituent orientations.[18] Based on this data it seems that Spong had a better claim on the distinction of thinking like the majority of Virginians than did the challanger.

Another effect the Phase III offensive intended to create was that Spong was a confused equivicator. This image was projected in a 30 second spot that featured a picture of Senator Spong alternating positive and negative. A voice-over matched the flashing image with statements about Spong's inconsistent actions on bussing, voting rights, liberal orientation, and voting with the other members of the Virginia delegation. The commercial is reminiscent of one produced for President Nixon's campaign that featured a picture of McGovern that rotated and was accompanied by similar narration. It summed up the anti-Spong attack and showed the incumbent at his most vulnerable worst.

The timing of these attacks assumed that Scott's image was secure and could not be damaged too badly by much man-to-man political body contact. In addition, there was the view that such direct challenges on the electronic media could not be responded to by the opponent. The materials were launched at a time when Spong could not retaliate effectively against the charges either in nature or kind. Most important, there was inadequate time to produce, distribute, and place television and radio materials to counter the opposition. An attempt was made to respond to the Scott attack in the press. Newspapers, however, were not an adequate vehicle to carryout either a defense or counterattack against the media blitz. The print media does not have the reach and impact that a well coordinated television and radio blitz have and therefore should not be considered as a means of response. The electronic experience, seems only to disable the candidate further.

Despite its inadequacy as an instrument of counterattack, the print media was used as a device to reinforce the television and radio communicated message. During the last days of the campaign, Scott's organization papered the state with a direct mail flyer. It summed up the candidate's positions, capsulized the main themes, redefined the lines of attack against the opponent, and showed Scott's support for Nixon. The former campaign press secretary, indicated that the tactic was considered a valuable adjunct to the other media efforts.[19] A less enthusiastic view, albeit one which seems more realistic, categorizes the distribution of such material along with bumper stickers and buttons as perhaps only marginally useful and supportive of an electronic media effort.

Considerable flexibility was also demonstrated by the Scott organization during Phase III. They were able to adjust the media to communicate the positive impact of a late campaign visit to Virginia by Vice-President Spiro Agnew on behalf of Scott. Agnew's appearance was televised in several areas across the state and his comments supporting Scott and indicating that the President needs such men in the Senate were transcribed for the last minute radio barrage. The effect of these messages was to raise the candidate's credibility and to have the chief Presidential representative and popular Republican confirm the need for Scott in the Senate. The image of winner was bestowed and the media was mobilized to publicize Scott's newest dimension. Radio was chosen as the vehicle primarily because it was easier to produce and distribute the necessary materials in the short time left before the election.

The advantage of preplanning and the expertise of Scott's organization was shown by the ease with which they were able to take advantage of the opportunity and switch into bolstering Scott's image during the midst of their heaviest anti-Spong efforts. The two actions are however very compatible and have a mutual reinforcing tendency.

Spong

The media campaign strategy devised by the Spong group envisioned a two-stage approach that was to low key, that stressed the elemental themes and developed as well as impressed the candidate's positive image on the electorate.

The first stage of the media campaign, therefore, adopted a straight image concept. The objective was to establish an acceptable and identifiable image of the Senator for the voter to associate with. Several spots were produced showing Spong as a loving family man, a hard working public servant, and a Senator concerned with the important questions facing Virginians. By comparison, the materials produced for this part of the campaign were superior in quality, from a professional point of view, than those of the Scott organization. The same is true of the entire television package. Unfortunately, there are no Oscars awarded for political media advertising. All that is remembered is who won the election.

The main Spong image spot is a background trailer that runs 4 minutes and 30 seconds in length. It is a good example of the technical quality and basic message of the campain's media materials. It was used extensively to develop the image judged necessary for attracting the voters. The film, entitled "Bringing It All Home," begins with Spong at the end of a Senate session and the seeming frustration of being unable to get measures through. Then the Senator is followed home to his family and then, as the narrator tells us, "farther from Washington . . . and deeper into Virginia." He is shown talking to various individual groups of constituents such as the elderly, farmers, youth, and shipyard workers eliciting their problems and listening to them. The film then cuts to Spong on the telephone in his kitchen at home presumedly working on legislation and checking on important details. The total effect of the commercial was to project the image of the concerned Senator constantly working on behalf of his constituents.

The film provided basic material from which other shorter media pieces were produced for the issue stage of the campaign. Unfortunately, the issue content of the follow-on spots seemed obscured by the heavy dosage of image and lack the more precise tone and focus of good issue spots.

Two other image pieces, 60 seconds each in length, invoke the qualities of integrity and independence to support and define the Spong image. The Senator is lauded for severing connections with his law firm and proclaims he is "not doctrinaire" and that his voting pattern is not determined by keeping "a finger to the political wind." The later comments are a soft and oblique jab at Scott who is viewed as being to rigidly devoted to the conservative philosophy and overly slavish to constituent interests. The statement represents one of the few media punches Spong himself took at Scott, but one probably missed by the audience.

Using well tested theory and technique, the spots were placed statewide, the most time was purchased in the largest media market, and the material attempted to be interesting and entertaining as possible. A field test of the first stage effects was to be made to determine if and how well Spong's image had been established and its accompanying message had penetrated the electorate. Positive survey results that the candidate's image had sufficiently hardened and was defined precisely enough by the voters to signal the transition into stage two of the strategy.

The second stage was to be issue oriented. The Senator was shown discussing major problems facing Virginians with representative groups of citizens. A variation of the Hillsboro technique, used so successfully in the 1968 campaign, was employed. Several spots show Spong with a few

concerned citizens around a dining room table, the elderly at a country store, young people in a backyard, laborers, and others discussing their problems and answering questions on his position. Unfortunately, the gears were not effectively switched and the image concept seems to tumble on over-shadowing the issues. The spots themselves lack impact, touch on sensitive issues, and articulate liberal sounding reasoning.

According to Jack Lewis, one of Spong's key campaign coordinators, the basic media strategy decision was to focus on defining the Senator's image. The straight image orientation that was adopted and therefore consequent nature and thrust of the media materials produced created limitations on the campaigns ability to transition effectively into an issue posture.[20] It seems that certain parameters were established because of the initial strategy emphasis that later presented the flexibility apparent in the Scott plan. Primarily, it appears that the problem may involve the commitment of the organization to conduct a two-stage campaign. Whereas in the Scott strategy, the three planned phases were considered as equal in importance and transition from one stage to another was preplanned, the Spong issue stage was of secondary importance and contingent on the successful completion of the image stage.

Other problems also appeared in the Spong media campaign. First, there was the allocation of financial resources for advertising placement. As noted earlier, considerable amounts were spent on expensive television time in the Northern Virginia-Washington, D.C. market. Scott paid little attention to this area of the state in terms of television. In that area, his media campaign relied on radio, especially near the end of the campaign, to reach selected potentially responsive groups of voters. In retrospect, the concentration on Northern Virginia may have been ill-advised since it would probably be carried anyway because of the generally more liberal orientation of the residents. Further, Spong was almost as well known in the area as he was in his native Tidewater region. Of course the placement pattern was consistent and appropriate in terms of an image campaign since the area offered the maximum audience available in any major media market in the state. The devotion of scarce resources to an area whose support may not have needed as much cultivation limited the amounts that could be spent in other parts of the state where Spong's support and image were far weaker.

Second, the media campaign attempted too broad an appeal. Instead of concentrating on reinforcing supporters beliefs, persuading potential supporters, and doing some limited conversion work, Spong seems to be talking to everyone at once. While the lack of concentration on any specific group of voters is a consistent practice in an image approach, it appears to have been less than effective with an audience sensitized to the presentation and discussion of issues in terms of legislative action.

Next, the 15, 30, and 60 second issue spots were somewhat soft in comparison with the Scott pieces. They seemed to talk around the problems in a vague general manner rather than directly to them. Only the spot on the problems of the elderly seems to come to the point of providing specific information as to the Senator's positive response to the issue in terms of legislative action.

A spot on bussing, for example, which would have been a point of confrontation between the two campaigns on a major issue, was disastorous.

Spong, pictured speaking to a small group of citizens around a table, explains his opposition to forced bussing in terms of its effect on achieving better racial relations and its educational counter productivity. The argument had little impact on audiences who had already defined the problem in more specific terms. Scott, on the other hand, drove directly to the point that bussing is unacceptable alternative using the appropriate racial code words and concepts, specifys actions he has taken in an attempt to end bussing, and questions Spong's commitment to relieve the problem. Of the two spots there is no question which is most effective in terms of having greater impact on the audience.

Fourth, Spong's media failed to go after Scott either by focusing on his weak record on civil rights, the environment, mine safety or by exploiting incidents such as his walk out of a black political meeting, outside campaign assistance, a substantial loan from industrialist J. Stetson Coleman, or the shallowness of positions. There is no anti-Scott phase in the essentially low-key media campaign that could have created an unacceptable negative image as had been done to Spong by the opposition. Only one commercial was uncovered that attempted to take the offensive against Scott. It is a 30 second spot featuring Vincent Thomas, an influential Tidewater resident, speaking on the problem of federal support of education. The later part of his message contains a direct comparison of the candidates voting on the question of education. The advertisement, however, had only regional application since its theme was relevant mainly to Southeastern Virginia. There is little evidence of any other countering of the Scott message in the campaign. Such replys, in retrospect, would have been a more effective defense against the Scott blitz.

Further, television may not have been the most effective medium for Spong to communicate his message. Aside from the Senator's self-admitted lack of charisma, media spots seemed inadequate to explain his actions on such measures as the Voting Rights Act and the Omnibus Crime Bill to the electorate. Thirty and sixty second, or even longer, formats could not transmit the rationale underlying his action in debate or voting pattern Spong's strength was in reasoned and dispassionate debate. This was best conveyed in print not in the drama charged television environment. In addition, the medium could not, it seems, adequately portray or explain the complex nature of Spong's other accomplishments and quiet style in the Senate to the satisfaction of the voters.

Conclusions

The objective of this paper was to examine the use of the media, especially television, as a campaign instrument in the 1972 Scott-Spong Senate election campaign in Virginia. On the basis of the data and discussion presented above, the following conclusions concerning the role of the media in the campaign and its effect on future Virginia politics seem appropriate.

First, it appears that the media was a significant variable in the outcome of the Scott-Spong election contest. The intense and complex uses of television and radio by the Republican challanger that were a key factor in the upset of political power. The paid advertising that blitzed the media was assigned the responsibility to carry out major portions of the overall campaign strategy. Primarily these were evoking a positive electorate response to a straight forward, issue oriented, conservative image and mes-

sage, and rejecting the formless omni-directional liberal image of the incumbent.

The mass media, especially television, served as a catalyst that activated the potential of other campaign factors, such as the political shift in the State and the public displeasure over forced bussing. It maximized their impact and communicated them to the electorate. The electronic media, and to a lesser extent, print provided a means to transmit a conservative socio-political message to the state-wide electorate audience, crystallize an acceptable and supportable candidate image, and impress both the simple message and defined image on the collective mind. A massive act of persuasion was conducted by the challenger via the media that created support among a plurality of voters for the conservative political option and won the election.

The Scott effort was almost a textbook example of Napolitan's definition of effective political communication. Simply, he advises that it is necessary to determine what the message is and then deliver it to the most responsive groups through the most effective means available.[21] In the Virginia context that meant that conservatism, association with the President, a tough stance on bussing, welfare, federal spending and a string of other issues, pointing the finger of liberalism-radicalism at the opposition, and the sustained use of television were the crucial campaign communication factors with regard to message and media.

On the other hand, the Spong organization's poor use or misuse of the media contributed to the incumbent Senator's defeat. The exact dimensions of the media's impact is difficult to measure precisely. However, in gross terms there seems to be sufficient evidence to conclude that media use did make a difference in deciding who won. The campaign under examination does seem to substantiate the importance of television and radio usage in a modern electoral campaign and the assertion that the candidate who can dominate the media, communicate his image and message more precisely, and contact the audience more directly do have an advantage in mobilizing support more effectively than one who lacks such focus and concentration.

In addition, it is difficult to accept the conclusion that mass media has little effect on electoral behavior on the basis of the above examination. Although no direct evidence of direct influence on personal voting choices is presented, it does seem reasonable to assume more than a casual relationship between the well-oiled media blitz, Scott's election to the Senate, and the consequent defeat of Spong. The differential use of the mass media seems to account, at least in part, for the outcome of events. The conclusion seems to hold even if the conservative view is taken that the media only provided a focus of organization and an efficient means to communicate to the voters.

Next, the study of the Scott and Spong media campaigns support the contention that the use strategy, placement, and exposure of materials are more determinative of election success than production quality. The Spong media package is very professional and technically well done. The 5 minute background trailer as well as the 30 and 15 second vignettes generally demonstrate evidence of production talent. By comparison, the Scott commercials are rather simple and at times unimaginative, repetitive, and seem to lack the

artistic or entertainment quality of the Spong materials. Unfortunately, the election is determined on the basis of votes rather than film quality. The effectiveness of the competing media campaigns is determined on how well the message is communicated to who rather than how good or enjoyable it was. Jim Callaway of Louis Holland Callaway Inc., a firm with considerable experience in Virginia politics put the matter in sharp perspective. "How you do it is merely useful," he bluntly pointed out. "What you say is crucial. Content is what counts in political advertising. Never technique."[22]

Finally, as a result of the 1972 Scott-Spong Senate campaign, the extensive use of the mass media, especially television, has become a prominent aspect of political activity in Virginia. The outcome of the election has made candidates and their organizations cognizant of the influence a sustained media effort can have on their chances of success. One example of the effect of the 1972 experience, especially the Scott media blitz results, had been the increased attention the principal 1973 gubenatorial candidates to the uses of television in their campaigns. It was projected that Independent Henry Howell intended to spend half of his $750 thousand campaign budget in a media effort to convince voters he is really less liberal than he had been popularly identified. In an analysis of the upcoming election one political writer concluded that "like last year (1972) the battle will turn on the basis of impressions gained from flickering tubes in livingrooms across the state."[23] It seems that it is impossible for Virginia politics to return to its traditional process of Byrd courthouse gang politics as a result of Scott's victory. Media consultants, pollsters, heavy financial backers and saleable images seem to have replaced them as the new king makers of state politics. A lasting effect of the Scott media campaign's success, to paraphrase former FCC Commissioner Nicholas Johnson, is that television has supplanted the traditional means of political power and candidate success potential will be measured in terms of access to television.[24]

NOTES

[1]Ernest D. Rose and Douglas Fuchs, "Reagan v. Brown: A TV Image Playback," Journal of Broadcasting, 12 (Summer, 1968), 247.

Several excellent studies of the impact and role of the mass media, particularly television, in contemporary politics are available, including Bernard Berelson, Paul Lazarsfeld, and William McPhee, Voting: A Study of Opinion Formation in a Presidential Campaign (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954); Kurt Lang and Gladys E. Lang, "The Mass Media and Voting," in American Voting Behavior, ed. by Eugene Burdick and Arthur J. Brodbeck (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1959), pp. 217-35; Joseph T. Klapper, The Effects of Mass Communication (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1960); Bernard Rubin, Political Television (Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Co., Inc., 1967); Kurt Lang and Gladys E. Lang, Politics and Television (New York: Quadrangle Books, 1968); Paul F. Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson, and H. Goudet, The People's Choice (3rd ed; New York: Columbia University Press, 1968); Robert MacNeil, The People Machine: The Influence of Television on American Politics (New York: Harper and Row, 1968); Gene Wyckoff, The Image Candidates (New York: Macmillan Co., 1968); J. G. Blumler and D. McQuail, Television in Politics: Its Uses and Influences (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969); Edward W. Chester, Radio, Television and American Politics (New York: Sheed and Ward, Inc., 1969); Joe McGinness, The Selling of the President, 1968 (New York: Trident Press, 1969); John Whale, The Half-Shut Eye: Television and Politics in Britain and America (New York: Macmillan Co., 1969); Harold Mendelson and Irving Crespi, Polls, Television and the New Politics (San Francisco: Chandler, 1970); Dan Nimmo, The Political Persuaders: The Techniques of Modern Election Campaigns (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1970); and Sig Mickelson, The Electric Mirror: Politics in an Age of Television (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1972).

[2]Harold Mendelson and Irving Crespi, Polls, Television and the New Politics; and Robert Agranoff, The New Style in Election Campaigns (Boston: Holbrook Press, Inc., 1972) pp. 8-44. See also D. L. Swanson, "Persuasion and the New Politics: Foundations for a Strategy of Communications in the Modern Presidential Campaign" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kansas, 1971).

[3]Senator William L. Scott, private interview held on July 19, 1973; and Richmond Times-Dispatch, November 8, 1972, p. 1.

[4]Agranoff, The New Style in Election Campaigns, pp. 1-8.

[5]Harry Stein, "The MOst Loathsome Man in the Senate," Ramparts, 11 (March, 1973), 21-4.

[6]Rose and Fuchs, "Reagan v. Brown: A TV Image Playback," 247-60.

[7]Jack Lewis, private interview held on August 1, 1973.

[8]Thomas Agee, private interview held on March 16, 1973.

[9]Ibid.

[10]Donald W. Osten, "How Media Planners Helped Percy Win in Illinois," Media Scope, 11 (July, 1967), 45-50.

[11]Hal Avery, Selling of a Candidate (Los Angeles: Western Opinion Research Center, 1971).

[12]Allan Jones and Jack Lewis, private interview held on August 1, 1973.

[13]James Roberts, private interviw held on July 19, 1973.

[14]"Politicking on Television," National Journal, 2 (October 3, 1970), 2138.

[15]On the strategies and techniques of an image campaign see Nimmo, The Political Persuaders, pp. 140-49; Lewis Chester, Godrey Hodgson, and Bruce Page, An American Melodrama: The Presidential Campaign of 1968 (New York: Viking Press, 1969) pp. 618-19 and 630-31; and Joseph Napolitan The Election Game and How to Win It (Garden City: Doubleday, 1972), especially Chapter 1.

[16]Edward Jones, "Senators' Votes Clash as Often as Ever," The Free-Lance Star (Fredericksburg, Va.), September 20, 1973, pp. 1 and 10.

[17]Senator William L. Scott, news conference held on September 28, 1973.

[18]League of Women Voters, Political Accountability Rating: 2nd Session, 92nd Congress, and "92nd Congress: Political Accountability Rating," Vista, 8 (February, 1973), 55.

[19]James Roberts, private interview held on July 19, 1973.

[20]Jack Lewis, private interview held on March 15, 1973.

[21]Joseph Napolitan, The Election Game and How to Win It, pp. 2-3.

[22]Jim Callaway, "Let's Cut the Baloney About Political Advertising," Politeia, 1 (Summer, 1972), 38.

[23]George M. Kelley, "Modifications Increase in Election Efforts," Virginian-Pilot, July 8, 1973, p. C3.

[24]Nicholas Johnson, How To Talk Back to Your Television Set (New York: Little, Brown and Co., 1970), p. 129.